

Application No.: 10/008,716
Amendment and Response dated March 1, 2006
Reply to final Office Action of November 23, 2005
Docket No.: 792-52 CPA/DIV
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Remarks/Arguments:

Introduction

Claims 35-39, 41, 43-53, 56-58, 60, 64, 65, 67, 68, 71-79 and 83-85 are pending. Claims 1-34, 40, 42, 54, 55, 59, 61-63, 66, 69, 70, 80-82 and 86 are canceled. Claims 45, 47-49, 52 and 79 are withdrawn.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 83-85 are allowed. Claims 42-43, 46, 50, 59-60, 66-68, 74, 76-78 and 80 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Accordingly, the allowable subject matter of claim 42 and intervening claim 40 have been included in independent claim 35.

Claims 43, 46 and 50 have been rewritten in independent form by including all of the limitations of claim 35.

Claim 53 has been amended to include the allowable subject matter of claim 66.

Claim 56 has been amended to include the allowable subject matter of claim 59.

Following the amendments above, claims 60 has been amended for antecedent basis. Claim 67 has been non-narrowingly amended to remove a semicolon.

Applicants respectfully submit that, as acknowledged by the examiner, the amended claims are patentably distinct over U.S. Patent Nos. 5,019,085 to Hillstead; 5,019,090 to Pinchuk and 5,474,563 to Myler et al. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections over these references under 35 U.S.C § 10(a) are respectfully requested.

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Claims 45, 47-49+, 52 and 79 are withdrawn. As these claims now depend from allowable claims, reentry of these claims is respectfully requested.

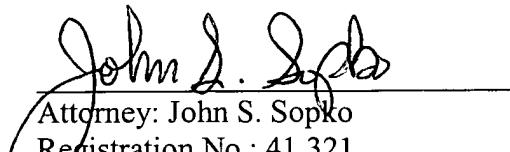
Summary

Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claims 35, 43, 46, 50, 53, 56, and 83-85, and all claims dependent therefrom, are patentably distinct. This application is believed to be in condition for allowance. Favorable action thereon is therefore respectfully solicited.

Should the Examiner have any questions or comments concerning the above, the Examiner is respectfully invited to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number given below.

No additional claim fees are due with this communication. Nevertheless, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge payment of any additional fees associated with this communication, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 08-2461. Such authorization includes authorization to charge fees for extensions of time, if any, under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17 and also should be treated as a constructive petition for an extension of time in this reply or any future reply pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.136.

Respectfully submitted,



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